

	INDIANA DEPARTMENT OF CHILD SERVICES CHILD WELFARE MANUAL	
	Chapter 11: Independent Living	Effective Date: July 1, 2006
	Section 7: Voluntary Chafee Independent Living Services	Version: 1

POLICY [REVISED]	OLD POLICIES 404.44, 404.442, 404.443, 404.49
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- The Indiana Department of Child Services (DCS) has determined the following youth meet the eligibility requirements for voluntary case management (CM) services:
 - youth ages **18 to age 21 who were formerly in foster care** after the age of 16 for a period of six months while a CHINS or Probation ward or a “ward or in the custody of another state” and had a case plan identifying the need for IL services; or
 - youth ages **16 to age 21 who were formerly in foster care** for a minimum of 6 months as a CHINS or Probation ward between the ages of 16-18 who have been adopted or placed in a guardianship from foster care and were receiving independent living services prior to the dismissal of their case.
- DCS will assure that voluntary services are available through contracted Chafee IL service providers in every county in the State for youth who meet the eligibility criteria above.
- DCS will assure that when youth engage in violent or other serious criminal behavior or are consistently non-compliant with the terms of the [voluntary service agreement](#), the Chafee IL service provider shall have the option of immediate termination of the agreement with notification to the State IL Coordinator.

Code References

- N/A

PROCEDURE

The Family Case Manager (FCM)/Probation Officer will:

- Refer for eligible youth as identified under policy (a) or (b) above requesting Chafee CM services.

The DCS State Independent Living (IL) Coordinator will:

1. Assist in the referral of a youth who was a “ward or in the custody of another state” once eligibility is established through contact with the other state.
2. Provide follow-up with the Chafee IL service providers to assure that appropriate services are being provided to youth who requesting voluntary services, but who are no longer CHINS or Probation youth between the ages of 18 and 21.
3. Provide assistance to all Chafee IL service providers regarding eligibility for youth referred for voluntary CM services.

The contracted Chafee IL Service Provider will:

1. Assure that all eligible youth receiving voluntary IL services participate directly in designing their program activities, accept personal responsibility for achieving independence, and have opportunities to learn from experiences/failures.

2. Assure that all eligible youth receiving services complete the Ansell-Casey Life Skills Assessment (ACLSA) at <http://www.caseylifeskills.org> within 30 days of receiving a referral. A paper copy of the completed assessment will be kept in the youth's file and a copy will be sent to the Voluntary Services Caseworker serving the area.
3. Develop an IL plan with the youth based on information provided by the assessment and provide services as identified by the plan through regular contact with the youth.

PRACTICE GUIDANCE

Closure of Voluntary Services Cases

Voluntary services will end when:

- The youth has achieved independence to the extent that financial support and social service support are no longer needed.
- The youth has made a voluntary decision not to participate in the program.
- The youth has been adopted and no longer desires to continue in services.
- The youth has consistently demonstrated unwillingness or inability to participate in services or follow the terms of the voluntary agreement.
- The youth turns 21 years of age.

Moving From One County to Another

If the youth moves to a county other than the county where he/she was a CHINS or Probation ward and chooses to re-enter services, the youth must contact the DCS office in his/her current county of residence and request that a referral be made. The county of residence must request verification of eligibility from the State IL Coordinator prior to making a referral if verification is not possible through Indiana Child Welfare Information System (ICWIS).

Terminating the Voluntary Service Agreement

For youth who are already on a voluntary agreement for services and are not meeting the terms of their agreement or wish to voluntarily terminate the agreement, the Chafee IL service provider will inform the youth in writing that he/she has 90 days to come back into compliance with the terms of the agreement or to renegotiate the terms of the agreement. The youth will also be informed that he/she has the option of scheduling a meeting with the Chafee IL service provider to discuss the terms of the agreement. If an agreement cannot be mutually agreed upon, services will be discontinued.

Reinitiating Services

Youth who have been previously discharged from Voluntary CM services either voluntarily or involuntarily may contact their previous Chafee IL service provider to reinitiate services without a new application. When services are reinitiated the youth must sign a new Voluntary Services Agreement, complete the ACLSA and participate in developing a plan of service.

FORMS AND TOOLS

[Voluntary Services Application and Service Agreement](#)

RELATED INFORMATION

Services Available

Youth ages 18-21 and who have left foster care will be offered guidance on financial issues, assessment services, housing, health care, counseling, employment, education opportunities

and other support services as identified in the Chafee Foster Care Independence Service Standards.

Voluntary Participation

Youth leaving foster care or former foster youth requesting IL independent living services must participate on a voluntary basis and sign the Voluntary Services Agreement with the service provider for case management services. This agreement outlines the services to be provided, the length of time expected for the service, and the plan for the youth's contribution. In addition, the independent living plan must include an operational plan describing how the young adult is going to assume responsibility once assistance ends.